

Zion Lutheran marks 115 years

Celebration will be held on Sunday

By HEATHER ACHESON
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Throughout its long history, Zion Lutheran Church in Camas has gone through changes. But according to Pastor Tom Tweed, at its heart it has managed to remain the same.

"Camas is changing all the time — it's incredible," he said. "I think as an established church in this community we have to be adept and aware of the changes around us."

And how does a church survive and even thrive after so many years? Tweed says at its core the answer is simple.

"It's having an openness and being welcoming of all people," he said. "That is one of the reasons this congregation is who it is and the church is what it is today. It's welcoming to all people."

Tweed has been a pastor for 34 years, the last 13 of those spent at Zion Lutheran. The church offers its 500 to 600 member congregation both traditional and contemporary services, and has thriving youth and senior citizen ministries.

"We have been blessed being part of a denomination that has been strong yet flexible," he said. "The church can't always rely on tradition. They have to have room to grow and change as times change."

Tweed describes the Camas congregation as having a passion to serve the community.

The church and its members provide assistance to a number of local non-profit organizations including the Inter-Faith Treasure House, SHARE, the Winter Hospitality Overflow Program and Habitat for Humanity. In addition, the church social hall is often the site for activities and events including the Lost and Found Cafe, which provides meals to the community twice a week, and meetings of local organizations such as the Soroptimists and Boy Scout troops.

On Sunday, the church will mark its 115th anniversary with a special service aimed at paying tribute to its roots.

"I think that is part of what we are celebrating," Tweed said. "How this church has been steadfast in serving the community and how it continues to serve the community."

Zion Lutheran has been a vital part of the community since it was first founded May 9, 1897, by a



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Zion Lutheran Church will mark its 115 anniversary this weekend. According to Pastor Tom Tweed, a highlight of the event will be a video tribute during the morning service that includes interviews with some of the church's most long-term members. The church was initially founded in 1897 at 12th Avenue and Division Street. It moved to its current location at Northeast Fourth Avenue and Garfield Street in 1939.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH 115TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The congregation will mark the occasion during Sunday's 9:30 a.m. service, which will include a special video presentation highlighted by interviews with longtime members. A brunch will follow in the church's social hall.

The church is located at 824 N.E. Fourth Ave. For more information, call the church at 834-4201.

group of 14 men.

Its first location was at 12th Avenue and Division Street, and its first pastor earned \$100 per year, plus a house, wood and food. The church moved to its present location at Northeast Fourth Avenue and Garfield Street in 1939. A parsonage and sanctuary were later built, and the social hall enlarged.

A number of renovations took place over the years, including the most recent addition in 2008 of the 6,000 square foot, two story Danielson Hall.

During the past few months, the church has been undergoing some cosmetic and structural upgrades. Its steeple as well as the framing on several stained glass windows are in the process of being restored, and some of the building's structural issues are being addressed.

"Our congregation has been very generous in making sure all of that happens," Tweed said. "We want to be able to make the church useful for future generations."